GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4984
ANSWERED ON:28.04.2005
DIGITALIZATION OF PRIVATE CHANNELS
Singh Shri Chandrabhan Bhaiya

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of private channels has increased manifold during the recent past;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to digitalize them in view of the problems being faced by Cable Operators in proper telecasting of so many channels;

(c) if so, the details in this regard;

(d) whether the Union Government is contemplating to allow the terrestrial channels in private sector; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION & BROADCASTING AND CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY)

(a): The availability of private TV channels has increased over a period of time. As many as 151 TV channels have been permitted to uplink from India. Besides, a large number of TV channels , which are uplinked from outside, are available for viewing in India

(b) & (c): The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has issued a consultation paper on the issue relating to digitalization of Cable Television on 3rd January, 2005. It has so far not made any recommendations in the matter to the Government.

(d) & (e):Terrestrial Television Transmission in India is presently being done by only Prasar Bharati, a public service broadcaster. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has only issued a consultation paper on 25th February 2005, on `issues relating to private terrestrial television broadcasting services`, seeking inputs from various stakeholders and to generate a discussion on the appropriate policy and licensing framework for introduction of private terrestrial TV broadcast service in India. TRAI has not formulated its recommendations so far. The Government shall take a view only after TRAI`s recommendations are received.